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Review Questions

•What is the umma in Islamic philosophy and practice? Why did Muhammad and later Muslim leaders think that it was important? What did they do to construct and preservethe umma?

•To what degree did the philosophy and practices of Islam appear to be new in Arabia? To what extent did they fit into existing philosophies and practices?

•Why have scholars disagreed as to whether early Islam improved the lives of women or made them more difficult?

•What is the basis for the division in Islam between Shi’a and Sunni groups?

•The political capital of Islam was moved from Medina to Mecca to Damascus to Baghdad. When did each of these moves occur, and for what reason?

•As between Sufis and the ulama, which group do you think did more to promote Islam in the world? Why do you hold this opinion? How did they do it?

•What were the ways in which Muslims preserved, enhanced, and transmitted knowledge and technology throughout their own domains and beyond?

•Give some historical examples of tensions and warfare between Muslims and Christians. Other examples of peaceful, mutually beneficial coexistence? Some historical examples of tensions and warfare between Muslims and Hindus? Other examples of peaceful, mutually beneficial coexistence?